

Strategic Watershed Action Teams (SWATs)

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Wildlife Management Institute (WMI)- Is currently involved in developing large early successional openings in Northern NH.

A WMI biologist attended a walk on a potential 13,000 acre parcel and offered various management techniques. The additional information helped the partnership better understand the wildlife potential of the property. These recommendations will most likely be funded in a NRCS cost-share agreement in 2014.

A WMI biologist in the southern portion of the state is working on landowner outreach in the Merrimack River area, where New England Cottontail is on a steep decline. The landscape is extremely challenging as most of the parcels are very small and many of them are high value commercial properties. WMI has contacted 10 new potential landowners in the region.

NH Fish and Game- has been working on environmental review of New England Cottontail applications as well as providing training and support for field staff statewide. Their staff has recently developed training on wildlife for NH staff which was well received. They have also developed a CCAA for use for New England Cottontail, and NRCS was able to negotiate the first NEC CCAA in the region.

NH Heritage Bureau- recently provided NRCS an update to the rare plant and animal data layer and has performed two field trainings on plant ID. They also have been providing field staff botany assistance via email.

Society for the Protection of NH Forests- continues to provide conservation planning for private landowners during regularly scheduled easement monitoring field visits. This upfront technical planning is helpful to landowners and also NRCS field staff as it reduces the time in the field for developing good contracts.

The Nature Conservancy- recently was at the state office in Durham, to update the State Conservationist on the “staying connected initiative” where TNC has done some GIS modeling to identify key wildlife corridors in the state. These areas are prime for land conservation and a variety of practices. NRCS will be working directly with their staff to help plan some large CSP agreements in the North Country.

Trout Unlimited- Continues to be a key partner to develop wood addition projects on small streams to benefit Brook Trout and Cold Water Fisheries. They currently are working with DOT and NRCS to develop a Fish Passage Solution at three key crossings and are working on wood additions in 15 new brooks for the WRP program. They have recently agreed to begin monitoring water quality data on streams with wood additions to help better understand the nutrient retention of these streams.